

Occupational Therapy

Undergraduate Degree Offered

- Bachelor of Arts in Human Performance and Health, leading upon successful completion to the Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) program.

Graduate Degrees Offered

- For information on the Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) and Occupational Therapy Doctorate (OTD), refer to the Graduate Catalog (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/schoolofmedicine/divisionofoccupationaltherapy/>).

Introduction

In the fall of 1993, the West Virginia Board of Trustees approved the establishment of a new master's degree program at WVU, leading to an entry-level master's degree in occupational therapy. WVU accepted its first students into the professional program in the fall semester of 1996.

The MOT program is designed as a combined Bachelor's/Master's degree program. Students are admitted to the MOT program after completion of 56 credit hours and successful completion of the application process. Prior to application, students are required to complete several prerequisite courses, which in most instances will take two years to fulfill. Completion of the Classroom and Fieldwork portions of the program takes 8 semesters. Students start the program in May of the year admitted and are continuously enrolled.

The Profession of Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy is the only profession that helps people across the lifespan to do the things they want and need to do through the therapeutic use of meaningful daily activities (occupations). Occupational therapists use the "occupations" of self-care, work, and play/leisure activities to increase independence, enhance development, and/or prevent disability. To achieve these goals occupational therapists may also adapt the task or the environment. Occupational therapists enable people of all ages to live life to its fullest by helping them promote health, and prevent—or live better with—injury, illness, or disability. Common occupational therapy interventions include helping children with disabilities to participate fully in school and social situations, helping people recovering from injury to regain skills, and providing supports for older adults experiencing physical and cognitive changes.

Occupational therapists work in a variety of settings. These could include hospitals, rehabilitation centers, nursing facilities, home health, outpatient clinics, private practice, school systems, private organizations, industry, and community agencies such as return to work programs, prisons, and community settings. The number of different places where therapists work is growing every year.

Accreditation Status MOT

The MOT program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 510E Bethesda, MD 20814. ACOTE's telephone number c/o AOTA is (301) 652-AOTA and its web address is www.acoteonline.org (<http://www.acoteonline.org/>). Graduates of the MOT program are eligible to sit for the national certification examination for the occupational therapist administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). After successful completion of this exam, the individual will be an Occupational Therapist, Registered (OTR). In addition, all states require licensure in order to practice; however, state licenses are usually based on the results of the NBCOT Certification Examination. Note that a felony conviction may affect a graduate's ability to sit for the NBCOT certification examination or attain state licensure.

What to Expect

Like many professional programs, the curriculum in the occupational therapy program is fixed and intense. The first professional year begins in the summer with basic sciences coursework relevant to the profession and practice of occupational therapy. Immersion in practice occurs from the first fall semester onward through integrated experiential, simulated, Level I and Level II fieldwork experiences. Coursework includes hands-on learning and interprofessional experiences that are directly linked to academic content, theory, and research.

Students in the program are required to participate in community service activities and the School of Medicine's laptop computer purchase lease-to-own program, which provides each student with a state-of-the-art computer that contains course and program-relevant software.

Students in occupational therapy must obtain a grade of at least C or a Pass in all professional courses. In addition occupational therapy students must maintain an OT coursework GPA of 3.0 or higher while in the OT Program. Since professional courses are offered once per year and are specifically sequenced, course failure may result in program dismissal or the delay of fieldwork and graduation.

Students in the OT Program must complete all didactic coursework and all fieldwork within a period of five years after commencing the occupational therapy program. Furthermore, all Level II Fieldwork must be completed within eighteen months following completion of academic coursework while remaining within the five-year time frame.

Housing and Travel for Clinical Fieldwork

The professional curriculum includes two off-campus, full-time clinical experiences known as Level II Fieldwork. Clinical fieldwork is an essential part of professional training and required by national OT educational standards. Students are assigned to Level I and Level II fieldwork sites locally, and at locations across the United States. Assignment to specialty fieldwork or elective internship is done based on student interest and site availability. Students can expect that at least some of their placements will be at a distance from home. Students are responsible for any related fieldwork or experiential expenses (i.e., background checks, physicals, etc.) as well as transportation, housing, and meal expenses. Students are also responsible for making their own housing and travel arrangements for clinical fieldwork. Information about housing options for affiliations is available from the academic fieldwork coordinator.

Background Checks

A felony conviction may impact a graduate's ability to take the NBCOT (National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy, Inc.) examination and/or obtaining a state license. For further information on NBCOT's Character Review Program, interested parties can obtain information from that Board on their web site at: <http://www.nbcot.org> (<http://www.nbcot.org/>).

Students enrolled in the WVU OT education program must complete drug testing and background checks to qualify for clinical and fieldwork.

ADMINISTRATION

CHAIR

- Steven Wheeler - PhD, OTR/L (Virginia Commonwealth University)
Professor

VICE CHAIR AND PROGRAM DIRECTOR, OTD

- Diana Davis - PhD, OTR/L (West Virginia University)
Associate Professor

PROGRAM DIRECTOR, MOT

- SueAnn Woods - PhD, MOT, OTR/L (West Virginia University)
Associate Professor

ACADEMIC FIELDWORK COORDINATOR

- Brian Scaife - OTD, OTR/L (Chatham University)
Assistant Professor

DOCTORAL CAPSTONE COORDINATOR

- Kayleigh Nolan - PhD, MOT, OTR/L (Towson University)
Assistant Professor

FACULTY

PROFESSOR

- Steven Wheeler - PhD, OTR/L (Virginia Commonwealth University)
Chair

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Amanda Acord-Vira - EdD, MOT, OTR/L (West Virginia University)
- Diana Davis - PhD, OTR/L (West Virginia University)
Vice Chair and Program Director, OTD
- SueAnn Woods - PhD, MOT, OTR/L (West Virginia University)
MOT Program Director

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Breanna Adkins - EdD, MOT, OTR/L (A.T. Still University)
- Richelle Gray - OTD, OTR/L (University of Toledo)
- Jacob Tyler Greenfield - OTD, MOT, OTR/L (West Virginia University)
- Heather Livengood - PhD, MOT (University of Pittsburgh)
- Kayleigh Nolan - PhD, MOT, OTR/L (Towson University)

OTD Doctoral Capstone Coordinator

- Brandon "Seth" Powers - MOT, OTR/L, CHT (West Virginia University)
- Brian Scaife - OTD, OTR/L (Chatham University)
Academic Fieldwork Coordinator

INSTRUCTOR

- Carrie Smith-Bell - MOT, OTR/L (West Virginia University)

PROFESSOR EMERITUS

- Anne Cronin - PhD, OTR/L (University of Florida)

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR EMERITUS

- Randy McCombie - PhD, OTR/L (Loyola University of Chicago)

Admissions for 2025-2026

Students typically spend the first two years of undergraduate study completing pre-requisite courses. Successful applicants to the MOT come from a variety of undergraduate degree backgrounds. Students may consult with an advisor or admissions specialist in the School of Medicine's Division of Professional and Undergraduate Programs to identify an appropriate entry major.

Current undergraduate students may apply to the MOT using the OTCAS application system. The application will be open from July 21 – February 15 each year and each class starts in May.

Course and program of study information for the graduate phase of the Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT) degree can be found in the Graduate Catalog (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/schoolofmedicine/divisionofoccupationaltherapy/>).

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Admission to the MOT program is competitive. In order to apply and be eligible for an interview for the MOT 2025 program, students must complete the following:

- MOT application through OTCAS between July 21-February 15
- Completion of 20 hours of observation with at least two different occupational therapists in at least two different sites
- Two recommendation letters (professional, academic or personal/non-relative) that speak to your skills, knowledge, aptitude related to becoming an occupational therapist
- Overall and pre-requisite GPA of 3.0
- The following courses* must be completed prior to admission to the program. Course work will only be accepted from an accredited institution in the United States. Applicants must complete each course with a grade of "C" or higher (including any remaining GEF courses).

Students applying to the program may only be enrolled in a maximum of 3 pre-requisite courses in the Spring semester prior to the start of the program. This does not include any remaining GEF courses.

- English Composition - 6 credits
- Introductory Psychology - 3 credits
- Developmental Psychology - 3 credits
- Abnormal Psychology - 3 credits
- Introduction to Sociology or Anthropology - 3 credits
- Biology with lab - 8 credits
- Statistics - 3 credits
- Physiology - 3 or 4 credits
- Medical Terminology - 1 credit
- Completion of General Education Foundations (GEF)** - 9 to 12 credits

*Some of the courses may have their own departmental pre-requisite requirements. Please check with individual departments to ensure that you have completed all requirements.

**Applicants from another college or university should consult the WVU Office of the University Registrar for information on current General Education Foundations (GEF) (<https://registrar.wvu.edu/curriculum-catalog/general-education-foundations-gef/>) courses and on how to transfer courses to WVU (<https://registrar.wvu.edu/transfer/>).

Major Code: 8336

General Education Foundations

Please use this link to view a list of courses that meet each GEF requirement. (<http://registrar.wvu.edu/gef/>)

NOTE: Some major requirements will fulfill specific GEF requirements. Please see the curriculum requirements listed below for details on which GEFs you will need to select.

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundations		
F1 - Composition & Rhetoric		3-6
ENGL 101 & ENGL 102 or ENGL 103	Introduction to Composition and Rhetoric and Composition, Rhetoric, and Research Accelerated Academic Writing	
F2A/F2B - Science & Technology		4-6
F3 - Math & Quantitative Reasoning		3-4
F4 - Society & Connections		3
F5 - Human Inquiry & the Past		3
F6 - The Arts & Creativity		3
F7 - Global Studies & Diversity		3
F8 - Focus (may be satisfied by completion of a minor, double major, or dual degree)		9
Total Hours		31-37

Please note that not all of the GEF courses are offered at all campuses. Students should consult with their advisor or academic department regarding the GEF course offerings available at their campus.

Curriculum Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
University Requirements		28
Human Performance & Health Program Requirements/Prerequisites		31
Human Performance & Health Major Requirements/Undergraduate OT Courses		67
Total Hours		126

University Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
General Education Foundation (GEF) 1,2,3,4,5,6,7, and 8 (31-37 Credits)		
Outstanding GEF Requirements 5, 6		6
WVUE 191	First Year Seminar	1
General Electives		21
Total Hours		28

Human Performance & Health Program Requirements/Prerequisite course work for OT

Code	Title	Hours
A minimum overall program/pre-requisite course work grade point average of 3.0.		
Select one of the following:		4-8
BIOL 101 & 101L & BIOL 102 & BIOL 102L or BIOL 115 & 115L	General Biology 1 and General Biology 1 Laboratory and General Biology 2 and General Biology 2 Laboratory Principles of Biology and Principles of Biology Laboratory	
ENGL 101	Introduction to Composition and Rhetoric	3
ENGL 102 or ENGL 103	Composition, Rhetoric, and Research Accelerated Academic Writing	3
OTH 201	Medical Terminology for Occupational Therapy	1

PSIO 241 or PSIO 441	Elementary Physiology Mechanisms of Body Function	4
PSYC 241	Introduction to Human Development *	3
PSYC 281	Introduction to Psychological Disorders *	3
SOC 101 or ANTH 105	Introduction to Sociology Introduction to Anthropology	3
STAT 211	Elementary Statistical Inference	3
Total Hours		31

*

PSYC 101 Introduction to Psychology serves as a prerequisite course and must be passed prior to enrolling in this course. Three credits of general electives will need to be used to take this course.

Human Performance & Health Major Requirements/Undergraduate OT Courses

Code	Title	Hours
Undergraduate Occupational Therapy Courses		
Minimum grade of C required.		
Minimum GPA of 3.0 required		
OTH 330	Clinical Reasoning Foundations	2
OTH 360	Scientific Inquiry for OT 1	3
OTH 361	Scientific Inquiry for OT 2	3
OTH 370	Theories and Science of Occupation	3
OTH 431	Clinical Reasoning in OT 2	2
OTH 497	Research (Graded as Pass/Fail)	2
OTH 502	Foundations of OT Intervention	3
OTH 504	Anatomic Foundations in OT	4
OTH 505	Disruptions in Occupational Performance	4
OTH 506	Functional Movement Across the Lifespan	2
OTH 507	Functional Kinesiology in Occupational Therapy	2
OTH 508	Developmental Life Tasks	3
OTH 509	Neurobiologic Foundations	4
OTH 510	Occupational Performance Evaluation 1	3
OTH 511	Occupational Performance Evaluation 2	4
OTH 514	Occupational Performance Eval 3	4
OTH 515	Interventions Across the Lifespan 1	4
OTH 516	Interventions Across the Lifespan 2	4
OTH 517	Interventions Across the Lifespan 3	4
OTH 532	Clinical Reasoning for Groups 3	3
OTH 584	Level 1 Fieldwork 1 Clinical Skills	2
OTH 585	Level 1 Fieldwork 2	2
Total Hours		67

SUGGESTED PLAN OF STUDY

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
BIOL 101 & 101L (GEF 2)		4 BIOL 102 & 102L (GEF 8)		4 PSIO 241	4
MATH 124		3 PSYC 241 (GEF 8)		3	
PSYC 101 (GEF 4)		3 SOC 101 or ANTH 105 (GEF 8)		3	
WVUE 191 General Elective		1 General Elective 3		3	
		14		13	4

Second Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
ENGL 101 (GEF 1)		3 ENGL 102 (GEF 1)		3 OTH 370	3
PSYC 281 (GEF 7)		3 GEF 6		3 OTH 504	4
STAT 211 (GEF 3)		3 Electives		6 OTH 507	2
OTH 201		1			
GEF 5		3			
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
		13		12	9

Third Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
OTH 330		2 OTH 361		3 OTH 431	2
OTH 360		3 OTH 508		3 OTH 497	1
OTH 502		3 OTH 509		4 OTH 516	4
OTH 505		4 OTH 511		4 OTH 584	2
OTH 506		2 OTH 515		4	
OTH 510		3			
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
		17		18	9

Fourth Year

Fall	Hours				
OTH 497		1			
OTH 514		4			
OTH 517		4			
OTH 532		3			
OTH 585		2			
General Elective		3			
		<hr/>			
		17			

Total credit hours: 126

Major Learning Outcomes**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

- Program content based on a broad foundation in the liberal arts and sciences. A strong foundation in the biological, physical, social, and behavioral sciences supports an understanding of occupation across the lifespan.
- The basic tenants of occupational therapy including its history, philosophy, foundation in occupation, and models of occupational performance.
- The process of screening, evaluation, and referral as related to occupational performance and participation that is culturally relevant and based on theoretical perspectives, models of practice, frames of reference, and available evidence.
- The process of formulation and implementation of the therapeutic intervention plan to facilitate occupational performance and participation that is culturally relevant; reflective of current occupational therapy practice; based on available evidence; and based on theoretical perspectives, models of practice, and frames of reference.
- Context of service delivery information and skills including the knowledge and understanding of the various contexts, such as professional, social, cultural, political, economic, and ecological, in which occupational therapy services are provided.
- Leadership and management skills including principles and applications of leadership and management theory.
- Promotion of scholarly endeavors including describing and interpreting the scope of the profession, establishing new knowledge, and interpreting and applying this knowledge to practice.
- Professional ethics, values, and responsibilities, including an understanding and appreciation of ethics and values of the profession of occupational therapy.